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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

This number of the *ADVOCATE* is given up largely to the report of the proceedings of the Peace Congress at Berne. We have tried to make the report as accurate as possible, and as full as we thought the patience of our readers would permit. There is much of the general spirit of such a gathering that can not be put into written accounts, but we trust that all may be interested in following the condensed report here given of the leading ideas and principles which controlled the Congress. The papers carefully prepared beforehand and submitted to the Congress could not be included in this summary. A number of the more important of them will be given in subsequent numbers of the *ADVOCATE*.

The Berne Committee on organization deserve much credit for the success of the Fourth Peace Congress. They did all in their power to provide for the comfort of the members and to make them feel at home in Switzerland. They prepared an excursion by special train to Lucerne, which, but for the rain that came on, would have proved one of the most delightful events of the Congress. They also secured from the Swiss Parliament a vote of 3000 francs towards defraying the expenses of the Congress. All will concede that it is not invidious to mention the name of Mr. Elie Ducommun, general Secretary of the Jura-Simplon railway, who sacrificed so much of time and labor for the Congress. His services were greatly appreciated by all who attended the Congress.

A prayer-meeting was held for half an hour each morning before the opening of the day's proceedings of the Congress. These were attended and participated in by the Christian delegates present from different countries, the largest number being from England, whose delegation was for the most part composed of Christian men and women. The meetings were not large, but interesting, and must, as all such meetings of prayer do, have had much more influence than can be outwardly estimated.

Many people seem incapable of understanding the nature and purposes of the Universal Peace Congress. This is notably the case with some journals, and even some members of the Congress itself have a wrong conception of its character and aims. It is not a legislative body, except for its own proceedings. It cannot make a law for the least nation in existence. Nor is it executive. It cannot enforce anything outside of its own

walls. It is worse than useless to talk of it as a body which can settle the question of Alsace-Lorraine, or of Bulgaria, or of the twenty millions of denationalized Poles. Those newspapers and advocates of peace who think the Congress is doing nothing if it does not tackle the "burning questions" of the hour, would wreck the whole organization, if they could have their way. The body has understood better its own mission and has steadily refused to admit these delicate questions into its program. This year when one of them shrewdly got in, the Congress turned it out as quickly as it could. Its business, one may certainly say its noble mission, is to enlighten public sentiment, to create a public conscience against war, to arouse and cement men together in a great anti-war body, which shall ultimately let itself be heard in cabinets and parliaments and courts, where laws are planned and made and executed. Its influence on these "practical questions" is indirect, but none the less powerful. It must first create and spread abroad the sentiments of justice and fairness and brotherhood and international respect, which have been so sadly wanting. As well bay at the moon as to try to settle a "question" between States until this more fundamental work is done. We must not pull up the tree by the roots and kill it, through impatience to have the ripe fruit in our hands.

A peace meeting for the discussion of the question from the Christian point of view, was held in Berne on Sunday evening after the Congress closed. It was chiefly due to the efforts of Miss P. H. Peckover that this meeting was held. The principal address of the evening was given by Dr. B. F. Trueblood. Short addresses were also given by Mr. Vasseur, of Paris, Mr. Babut, of Nîmes, and by Miss Peckover, of Wisbech, England.

Of the delegates appointed by the American Peace Society to go to Berne, five were present at the meetings, viz., Hon. S. H. M. Byers, Dr. Philip S. Moxom, Mrs. Moxom, Mrs. H. B. Goodwin and Dr. B. F. Trueblood.

The Universal Peace Union of Philadelphia was also represented by five delegates, of whom Mrs. Belva Lockwood was the chief speaker.

The American Peace Society was remembered in the will of John G. Whittier to the amount of \$500. One of the last acts of Whittier's life was to sign, as Vice-President, some certificates of life-membership for the Society.

The poet Tennyson has been ill since Sept. 27, and as we go to press we hear that he has passed away.

At a regular meeting of the Directors of the American Peace Society on Oct. 3d the following resolution was passed: "The Secretary is requested to prepare a brief memorial notice of the late John G. Whittier for publication in the *ADVOCATE OF PEACE*, and to send copies of the same to the family and relatives of the deceased."

Gen. Dragomiroff, the hero of the Russo-Turkish war, the most popular soldier in Russia, who was expected to command the armies of the Czar in the next war, was dismissed on the 19th of September. The cause of his dismissal was his harsh criticism of the men under his command. His theory of the soldier was that he is to be nothing but an automaton. This action of the Czar is looked upon as favoring peace.

The *Independent* has the following with which we are in hearty sympathy:

"The feeling of the Chinese against the Geary Bill is becoming more and more bitter. In New York City a mass meeting was held last week denouncing it, and in San Francisco the six Companies have issued proclamations urging that no Chinaman register or obey the law. Similar feeling exists in Chicago. We hope that everything possible will be done to retrieve this great mistake and remove the foul blot from our country."

We have secured a supply of "Pax Mundi" and "War as It Is," previously mentioned in our columns, and shall keep them for sale. The former is a concise statement of the history of the peace movement and contains much valuable information. The latter, illustrated, is a vivid presentation of the terrible realities of war. We shall be glad to supply these works to any who may wish a more intimate acquaintance with the peace cause. For prices see page 175.

The death of Joseph Ernest Renan on the 2d inst., at the Collège de France, removes one of the prominent figures of this century. He was educated for the Catholic priesthood. In his reaction against the formalism of the Romish Church he became a skeptic and agnostic, and spent his strength chiefly in trying to undermine the foundations of Historic Christianity. He was the author of many books connected with the subjects of New Testament and Old Testament History, the chief of which was his *Life of Jesus*. He was a member of the Institute and at his death had been for nine years "administrateur" of the Collège de France.

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MR. SNAPE, M. P., proposed, on behalf of the English delegation, that all resolutions should be clearly given in English as well as in French, and when any question came to vote that it should be clearly stated in English, so that they might know definitely on what they were asked to vote; also that all resolutions and amendments should be given in the words in which they were moved. This course was adopted.

The program was then taken up. The following proposition of Mr. Alfred H. Love, of Philadelphia, was left over from the morning session:

"Whenever a difficulty threatens to cause a war between nations, the Peace Societies of these nations ought immediately to inform the Bureau, which, in turn, should advise all Peace Societies of it, in order that they may address their several governments with the view of bringing about a peaceful solution of the difficulties. The Bureau itself should also address an appeal to governments with this aim."

MR. ELIE DUCOMMUN, in presenting the resolution on behalf of Mr. Love absent, said that there was no necessity of passing it, as the Bureau were sufficiently authorized, by the statutes previously adopted, to do all that the resolution contemplated.

Mrs. Belva Lockwood withdrew the last sentence of the proposition, on behalf of Mr. Love.

The PRESIDENT then put the question as to whether the resolution should be adopted omitting the last clause, or the course suggested by Mr. Ducommun be followed. The latter course was followed by a vote of 39 to 11.

The next topic on the program was

INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION.

This was considered under three separate heads:

1. The Institution of Tribunals.
2. The Sanction of Arbitral Decisions.
3. Permanent Treaties of Arbitration.

The three subjects were first presented by the persons who had been named on the program, and then followed a discussion on the whole subject, extending over into the next day, which for ability and brilliancy is rarely surpassed.

The first proposition taken up was that of Mr. J. M. Wallace, Vice-President of the Universal Peace Union of Philadelphia. The substance of the proposition was that an International Court of Arbitration be formed (presumably by the Peace Congress or the Peace Societies, though the proposition does not say), which any two nations might apply to at their discretion, paying the expenses of the court for the time being, until it should have a permanent fund at its control.

MRS. LOCKWOOD was of opinion that the proposition was impracticable and might as well be withdrawn. It was dropped and not afterwards called up.